

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-06 OIC-02 ACDA-07

CIAE-00 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05

FEAE-00 DODE-00 MCT-01 /075 W
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R 231511Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7246

INFO ERDA HQ WASH DC

ERDA HQ GERMANTOWN MD

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

US MISSION IAEA VIENNA 144

US MISSION EC BRUSSELS 264

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 6238

ALSO FOR NRC; RIO FOR USDEL IAEA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, PARM, AR

SUBJECT: VISIT TO ARGENTINA OF US REP TO IAEA

REF: STATE 207402

1. DR. GERALD F. TAPE VISITED ARGENTINA AS SCHEDULED, AND, ACCOMPANIED BY S&T COUNSELOR, VISITED EZEIZA ATOMIC CENTER, CNEA HQ, AND ATUCHA NUCLEAR POWER STATION. CNEA PRESIDENT CASTRO MADERO HOSTED DINNER FOR DR. TAPE PRIOR HIS OWN DEPARTURE FOR RIO. DR. TAPE MET WITH AMB. HILL, AND EMBASSY HELD RECEPTION IN HIS HONOR.

2. NON-PROLIFERATION ISSUE WAS TOUCHED UPON AT LUNCHEON IN CNEA HQ HOSTED BY CNEA ACTING PRES. AGUIRRE. DR. TAPE HELPED CONVINCE CNEA PERSONNEL THAT THERE SHOULD ALSO BE
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SAFEGUARDS CONCERN OVER PLUTONIUM WHICH IS EXPOSED BEYOND

OPTIMUM BURNUP FOR WEAPONS GRADE MATERIAL, AS IT IS POSSIBLE IT COULD BE MADE, E.G. BY TERRORISTS, INTO A CRUDE DEVICE WHICH COULD BE EXPLODED WITH HE TO SCATTER PU AROUND AS MINIMUM, AND POSSIBLY EVEN DETONATE NUCLEARLY WITH A HIGHLY UNPREDICTABLE YIELD. POTENTIAL FOR THREAT OR BLACKMAIL BY GROUPS WHICH OBTAINED SUCH PU WAS MATTER WHICH WOULD BE OF CONSIDERABLE CONCERN.

3. CNEA PERSONNEL (PARTICULARLY LEGAL/INT. AFFAIRS CHIEF MARTINEZ FAVINI) COMPLAINED ABOUT PRESSURE BEING APPLIED BY GERMANS TO TIE UP ATUCHA ON SAFEGUARDS IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR SUPPLYING FUEL RELOADS FOR ATUCHA I. SUCH PRESSURE HAD BEEN ATTRIBUTED BY GERMANS TO U.S. THRU LONDON SUPPLIERS CLUB. MARTINEZ FAVINI STATED THAT ATUCHA "VOLUNTARY" SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT WHICH EXPIRES IN 1977 HAD BEEN ENTERED INTO IN GOOD FAITH AND THAT GERMANS (AND THEIR COLLEAGUES IN LONDON CLUB) SHOULD HONOR IT UNTIL IT EXPIRES. HE NOTED THAT ARGENTINA INCAPABLE OF MANUFACTURING ITS OWN FUEL IN THAT PERIOD, NEEDED FUEL FOR POWER, THUS WAS UNFAIRLY VULNERABLE. DR. TAPE NOTED THAT ATUCHA SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT WAS UNIQUE AND THAT IT HAD BEEN AGREED TO BY MANY ONLY BECAUSE OF ASSURANCE OF SAFEGUARDS TRIGGERED BY U.S. SUPPLY OF HEAVY WATER. (COMMENT: WE HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN TOLD BY GERMANS THAT GOA HAD AGREED TO EXTEND PERIOD OF ARGENTINA-IAEA ATUCHA SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT, BUT THIS APPARENTLY HAS NOT BEEN FOLLOWED THROUGH TO DATE.)

4. IN VISIT TO ATUCHA I, WE LEARNED THAT FUEL IS EXPOSED TO 5500MWD/T, AND THAT AN AVERAGE OF 1.2 ELEMENTS PER DAY (OF TOTAL OF 253) ARE REMOVED FROM REACTOR. THE PLANT IS OPERATING AT 340 MW, BUT OFTEN HAS TO DROP LOAD ON SUNDAY MORNINGS. AN ANNUAL OUTAGE IS PLANNED FOR JAN.-FEB. 1977, AT WHICH NEW INSTRUMENTATION WILL BE INSTALLED AND POWER LEVEL SUBSEQUENTLY INCREASED BY 8 PERCENT. HEAVY WATER MAKEUP IS RUNNING AT ABOUT 1.5 TONS

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YR. (TOTAL INVENTORY IS 320 TONS.) LOSSES ARE ABOUT 3 KILOS/DAY, WELL UNDER THE GUARANTEE FIGURE.

5. THE RA-3 REACTOR AT EZEIZA IS SCHEDULED FOR A 3-MO QH SHUT-DOWN IN FEB. 1977.

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6. DR. TAPE WAS WELL RECEIVED BY CNEA PERSONNEL FROM CASTRO MADERO DOWN AND EMBASSY REGARDS IT AS HAVING BEEN IMPORTANT, POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN U.S.- ARGENTINE NUCLEAR RELATIONS.

7. ABOVE WAS PREPARED AFTER DEPARTURE OF DR. TAPE.
HILL

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